

REMARKS

Witney

Claims 1-2, 6, 8-11 and 34-36 have been rejected as anticipated by Witney (US 4,323,829). Witney does not disclose a bridge circuit that is “balanced” and “unbalanced” as recited in claim 1. The circuit in Witney changes frequency based upon the presence of a hand, but is always oscillating.

Schulz

Claims 12, 21, 24-27 and 33 have been rejected as obvious over Schulz (US 5,880,538) in view of Ladewig. Schulz states several times that, “One important feature of the invention is that the switching state of the circuit is unchanged when the user removes her hand from the vicinity of the operating electrode.” (col. 4, lines 56-59). For example, when the user unlocks the door by moving her hand toward the handle, the door does not re-lock when the user moves her hand away. (col. 3, lines 29-38). This is a fine feature for a door handle, but this would not be an acceptable way of operating a vehicle horn - - at least, not acceptable enough to render it obvious. One of skill in the art would not think to use a switch that would remain on after your hand is moved away for a vehicle horn.

Ladewig

Claims 12 and 21-22 have been rejected as obvious over Ladewig in view of Schulz. Again, it would not be obvious or desirable to use the Schulz circuit in a vehicle horn. The Ladewig horn does not stay on after the user removes his hand. It would be undesirable and decidedly unobvious to replace the circuitry in the Ladewig horn with the Schulz circuit, which is not designed for horns. Therefore, claims 12 and 21-22 are not obvious.

Claim 21 recites, “enabling the vehicle horn based upon the change in capacitance indicating that the hand is present” and “disabling the vehicle horn based upon the change in capacitance indicating that the hand is not present.” As explained above, the Schulz circuit would stay on after the hand is removed. Thus, Ladewig and Schulz do not render claim 21 obvious.s

If any fees or extensions are due, please charge Deposit Account 50-1482.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: July 15, 2008